

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1829

S E C R E T ISLAMABAD 8041

NODIS/CHEROKEE

FOR THE SECRETARY FROM THE AMBASSADOR

E.O. 11652: XGDS-3

TAGS: PFOR, PK, US, XF

SUBJ: BHUTTO'S COMMENTS ON THE MIDDLE EAST

REF: SECTO 10198

1. I SAW BHUTTO IN KARACHI ON THE EVE OF HIS DEPART-
URE FOR SAUDI ARABIA ON THE SUBJECT OF REFTEL CONTAIN-
ING YOUR LETTER TO HIM AND INSTRUCTIONS REGARDING MY
ORAL REMARKS IN CONNECTION WITH PAST LETTERS FROM
HIM TO YOU AND THE PRESIDENT. THIS MESSAGE WILL COVER
ONLY HIS REMARKS ON THE MIDDLE EAST PORTION OF YOUR
LETTER.

2. BHUTTO SAID HE WOULD BE MOST HAPPY TO PUT ACROSS TO
THE SAUDIS THE POSITIVE VIEWS YOU EXPRESSED IN YOUR
LETTER. HE WAS HIMSELF IMMENSELY PLEASED TO NOTE YOUR
EMPHASIS THAT OTHER MOVES SUCH AS ON THE SYRIAN PROBLEM
AND THE PALESTINIANS NEEDED TO BE TACKLED, AND THE DETER-
MINATION OF BOTH YOURSELF AND THE PRESIDENT THAT IT HAD
TO BE SO. HE HAD NO DOUBT WHATSOEVER THAT YOU BOTH
MEANT THIS AND WOULD LEAVE NO STONE UNTURNED, AND AT WHAT-
EVER ENERGY AND EFFORT REQUIRED, TO MAKE IT SO.

3. HAVING SAID THIS, HE THOUGHT THAT OUT OF OUR FRIEND-
SHIP HE WOULD TELL US THAT HE DIDN'T THINK THINGS WOULD
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WORK OUT AS WE WISHED AND THAT THE NEXT STEP, ASSUMING
YOUR PRESENT EFFORT SUCCEEDS AS REGARDS THE EGYPTIAN FRONT,
WOULD LEAD TO AN IMPASSE. HE SAID HE WAS SPEAKING AS ONE
WHO CONSIDERED RELATIONS WITH THE US AS VITAL AND WHO

BELIEVED THAT ANY SETBACK IN THEM WOULD BE DISASTROUS FOR PAKISTAN. IN THIS CONTEXT HE THOUGHT YOU AND THE PRESIDENT WOULD WANT TO CONSIDER ALL FACETS OF EVERY PROBLEM IN THE MIDDLE EAST AND PERHAPS HIS OWN PESSIMISTIC FEELINGS ABOUT THE FUTURE.

4. BHUTTO SAID THAT, WHILE HE WOULD NOT MENTION IT IN CONNECTION WITH ANY OF THE SPECIFICS HE WAS ABOUT TO TELL ME, AN UNDERLYING FACTOR IN HIS THINKING WAS THE UNFORTUNATE TIMING OF OUR COMING ELECTIONS AS FAR AS THE MIDDLE EAST WAS CONCERNED. HE SAID HE WAS FIRST AND FOREMOST A POLITICIAN, AND KNEW FIRST HAND THAT THE EMOTIONS OF PEOPLE HAD A POWER OF THEIR OWN THAT COULD NOT BE IGNORED, PARTICULARLY IN A DEMOCRACY SUCH AS OURS.

5. BHUTTO SAID HE HAD HIGH REGARD FOR SADAT AND THOUGHT THAT HE HAD BEEN VERY ACCOMMODATING. BUT HE SAID HE WOULD NOT NECESSARILY DESCRIBE THE CONCESSIONS HE HAD MADE AS STATESMANSHIP BUT MORE AS AN ACCOMMODATION. HE SAID (1) HE THOUGHT THE EGYPTIAN MILITARY HAD LOST THEIR WILL TO FIGHT AND SADAT HAD HAD TO TAKE THIS INTO ACCOUNT, AND (2) THAT SADAT WAS STAKING EVERYTHING, ON BOTH HIS FIRST AND SECOND AGREEMENTS THROUGH YOUR GOOD EFFORTS, TO MAKE POSSIBLE AN ECONOMIC BOOM TO TURN ATTENTIONS AWAY FROM THE ISRAELI PROBLEM. HE SAID (1) ABOVE HAD INHERENT IN IT THE DANGER THAT SADAT COULD BE OVERTHROWN. AS REGARDS (2) ABOVE, BHUTTO REMINDED ME THAT HE WAS FROM AN UNDERDEVELOPED COUNTRY AND HE KNEW THAT THE ECONOMIC MIRACLES SADAT WAS HOPING FOR JUST DIDN'T HAPPEN OVERNIGHT, WHETHER IN A VERY RICH UNDERDEVELOPED COUNTRY LIKE IRAN OR A VERY POOR COUNTRY. SO THERE WOULD BE NO GREAT QUICK CHANGE FROM POVERTY FOR THE EGYPTIANS. AFTER A PERIOD OF GREAT EXPECTATIONS AND BUOYANCY, IN WHICH THE PUBLIC POSTURE OF EGYPT MIGHT APPEAR TO TURN BELLICOSE OR EVEN CHAUVANISTIC, THE LETDOWN WHICH WOULD COME WOULD ALSO ENDANGER SADAT. IF HE TRIED TO RECOUP BY BOLDNESS AGAIN ON THE ISRAELI FRONT HIS MILITARY MIGHT GET RID OF HIM AS
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A PRETEXT FOR NOT FIGHTING AGAIN.

6. AS A COROLLARY TO THIS SCENARIO HE SEES THE ISRAELIS SAYING "BAS" (ARABIC AND URDU FOR ENOUGH OR STOP) AS REGARDS FURTHER MOVES RE SYRIA, THE PALESTINIANS, ETC. (HE WAS POLITE ENOUGH NOT TO SAY SO BUT I THINK HE HAD OUR ELECTIONS IN MIND). THEN HE SAID THERE WOULD BE A DIVISIVE EFFECT AMONG THE ARABS. HE THOUGHT SAUDI ARABIA AND THE GULF STATES WOULD TOLERATE A STATUS QUO FOR AWHILE AND POSSIBLY TUNISIA. MOROCCO MAYBE AND SUDAN PERHAPS. LIBYA WOULD DENOUNCE AND ALGERIA (UNLESS WE ARE MAKING MORE INROADS THAN HE KNOWS THERE). IRAQ OF COURSE WOULD BE IN THIS CAMP. SYRIA, AND ASSAD IN

PARTICULAR, WOULD BE INTENSELY TROUBLED, CHINAFOULDN'T
LIKE IT--AND THE SOVIETS WOULD BE AROUND SMILING LIKE
CHESHIRE CATS*

7. BHUTTO RETURNED TO HIS EARLIER REMARK THAT HIS OWN
PREDICTIONS WOULD IN NO WAY AFFECT SUPPORTING YOUR VIEWS
IN YOUR LETTER AND YOUR OBVIOUS DETERMINATIONM HE SAID
HE EARNESTLY HOPED IS PREDICTIONS WERE WORNG, AS PEACE
IN THE MIDDLE EAST WAS SO VITAL TO US, AND INDEED TO
PAKISTAN AS WELL. BUT HE SAID HE COULD NOT GO BEYOND
THE ROLE OF TRYING TO BE HELPFUL AS PAKISTAN WAS MUSLIMN
BUT NOT ARABIC, AND THE ARABS HAD TO MAKE THEIR OWN
POLICY, BE IT WAR OR NEGOTIATIONS, STEP BY STEP OR
GENEVA, PEACE OR CAPITULATION.

8. I SAID I WAS ENCOURAGED BY YOUR LETTER AND ITS
OBVIOUS STRESS ON NECESSARY NEXT STEPS. HE AGREED BUT
REMINDED ME AS A LAST THOUGHT THAT THE ISRAELIS WERE
VERY SMART PEOPLE. I SAID I SUSPECTED YOU KNEW THEM
PRETTY WELL YOURSELF BY NOW.

9. MY CONVERSATIONS WITH BHUTTO ON THE LETTERS TO YOU
AND THE PRESIDENT FOLLOWING YOUR TALK WITH AZIZ AHMED
WENT WELL. IN VIEW OF PAST TALKS WITH BHUTTO BY BOTH
YAQUB AND MYSELF, THIS IS NO LONGER A LIVING SUBJECT
HERE. MY NEXT MESSAGE WILL THEREFORE BE PRIMARILY TO
COMPLETED AND CLOSE THE RECORD ON THIS SUBJECT.

BYROADE

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